

Annual Report: Frequently Asked Questions

As you know, the process and guidelines for preparing annual progress reports are undergoing substantial changes across the Federal Government. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is moving towards standardizing all annual progress reports in terms of both a standard format and consistent deadline for all grant awards.

As such, the NSGO has modified the annual reporting guidance. This year, annual progress reports from all Sea Grant Programs are due to the NSGO on August 30, 2006. The time period you need to report on is February 1st or March 1, 2005 (depending on your start date) through March 31, 2006.

A final version of annual progress reporting guidance was sent to you by Jim Murray on May 9th, which can also be found on the National Sea Grant College Program Website (<http://www.seagrants.noaa.gov/other/admininfo.html>).

Again, the goal is to make the reporting process as simple and straightforward as possible while ensuring that all programs report information in a consistent manner. In addition, our intent is to collect on an annual basis, much of the same information developed for your PAT briefing books. Ideally, the information compiled for each annual report should be easily transferable to the briefing book. The objectives of the annual report guidance are to:

- (1) Be prepared to meet new OMB requirements (expected to be issued in FY 2007);
- (2) Enhance the NSGO's ability to aggregate data at the national level;
- (3) Develop a reporting system that meets multiple reporting requirements for NOAA and the Sea Grant programs, and is consistent with Program Assessment requirements; and
- (4) Gather network information for NOAA's Annual Operating Plan.

Below are a few frequently asked questions that may help you complete your annual progress report.

Q: Where do I submit the progress report that is due on August 30, 2006?

A: This report should be submitted via email to your NSGO Program Officer. Please attach Word or Excel files, and not PDF files, since we will need to be able to cut and paste the information.

Q: Where is the link where one can create a progress report in any of our active grants on Grants Online?

A: According to the Grants Office, the link will not be available until the day following the end of the reporting period. When it is time for you to submit an annual progress report to Grants Online, you will be able to cut and paste the information from the progress report you submitted on August 30th into grants online.

Q: When is this progress report due on Grants Online?

A: According to the Grants Office, you cannot file a report until after the award period is complete. This is in order to prevent people from coming back into the system to modify previous draft reports. This means that you cannot submit your report onto Grants Online on the August 30th due date.

Grants Online is (or will be) set up for you to upload your progress report on the day following the end of the actual award period (not the reporting period). For Sea Grant, this means that the progress reporting page for omnibus annual awards will become available on Grants Online on February 1, 2007. You will have 30 days to complete the report for Grants Management - by March 2, 2007.

If you have a stand alone award, you will receive a task to upload your progress report on the day following the end of the reporting period.

If you have an omnibus award with an amendment extending the final reporting period until a later date, the reporting period will be 30 days following the end of the award.

Q: Will Grants Online notify me when this progress report is due?

A: Once the reporting window is open for each award, your University Sponsored Programs Office will receive a task. Please note that the task will not be sent directly from Grants Online to the individual state Sea Grant Programs. If you think you should receive a task, and your University Sponsored Programs Office has not received one, please contact the Grants Online Help Desk via email GrantsOnline.HelpDesk@noaa.gov or by phone toll free at 1-877-662-2478.

Q: How do I submit my progress report on Grants Online?

A: Go to the Grants Online training page:

http://www.ofa.noaa.gov/~grantsonline/gol_training.html

Click "[Grants Online Financial and Performance Progress Reports Reference Guide for Grantees](#)" and read pages 3-9. This training walks a grantee through how to submit a progress report in the 30 days following the end of the reporting period.

Q: I know that my University Sponsored Programs Office is responsible for submitting the reports, but it will be difficult for them to know which attachments go with which award. We would like specific submission guidance (for Grants Online from a university perspective) to be sent out.

A: You are correct - the University Sponsored Programs Office is responsible for submitting the reports. They will receive the task through Grants Online. (See Q: "How do I submit my progress report on Grants Online?" above.) You will need to work closely with them to ensure that all appropriate attachments are associated with the correct award numbers.

Q: Often the "Project Completion Reports" that I receive from the PIs in my program are in excess of 20 pages each. With an award such as an omnibus, which includes up to 20 separate projects, am I to include all of the Project Completion Reports in the Annual Report?

A: That is at the discretion of the programs. If you'd like to include them, fine. However, you may decide to submit only the summary of the most salient points for that specific section.

Q: The guidance for Appendix F requests the number of students supported by any Sea Grant funds (i.e., hourly supported, tuition and/or stipend). What about students who were not funded by Sea Grant dollars, but were part of a project (e.g., a student volunteer)?

A: There are Sea Grant projects in which volunteer students are involved, and those numbers are not captured here. If a program wants to include this information, then please add an additional column to the table.

Q: Appendix E requests publications that were produced during this reporting period, but what about a publication that wasn't published during this reporting period, but was just discovered?

A: You may include these publications if you wish, but list the year they were published, and denote them somehow (asterisks, italics, footnote, etc.).

Q: What's the difference between Section I, 5th bullet (Accomplishments and outcomes from this award) and Section II (Impacts)?

A: Section I. is for the awards you are reporting on during the current reporting period, and the accomplishments/outcomes that occurred during the reporting period. Outcomes, as described in the PAT Manual (page 38) are "the demonstratable results of a program's outputs." Section II (Impacts) is a section that allows you to include impacts of projects that may have been funded years ago, but the impact of that project has occurred during the current reporting period.

Q: In Appendix A, Management Team and Staff Composition, there are two columns where matching funds could fit: (1) # of FTEs funded by Sea Grant \$ and (2) # of FTEs funded by Non-Sea Grant \$. Which column should I include the matching funds?

A: Please include the matching funds in the "# of FTEs funded by Non-Sea Grant \$.